

EPIRHEXIS COPE, 1866 (AMPHIBIA: SALIENTIA): REQUEST FOR
SUPPRESSION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS. Z.N.(S.) 1824

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Baird (1859) named *Batrachyla longipes* on the basis of a single specimen (now lost) collected 40 leagues north of Mexico City. Cope (1866) diagnosed a new genus, *Epirhexis*, with *Batrachyla longipes* as the type-species. Boulenger (1882) placed *B. longipes* in the status of *species inquirenda* in his catalogue and was followed by Nieden (1923). Barbour (1923) and Kellogg (1932) placed the species in the genus *Eleutherodactylus*; they based their conclusions on a misidentified specimen (Taylor, 1940 a). Lynch (1963) in pointing out certain errors in the figures of *Batrachyla longipes*, concluded that little, if any, faith could be placed in the accuracy of the original figures (the figures serve as the sole indication) and that the name should be regarded as a *nomen dubium*.

In the course of reviewing *Syrrhophus*, geographic variation in *S. latodactylus* was observed. This variation had been earlier noted in the original description by Taylor (1940 b). The southern populations are unlike other *Syrrhophus* in having dorsal patterns of large blotches, whereas other species of the genus have flecked or punctate patterns (Firschein, 1954). *Batrachyla longipes* and *Syrrhophus latodactylus* (from the southern part of its range) share the following characteristics: the dorsal colour pattern consists of large blotches or spots; vomerine teeth are present; and the digital tips are expanded. The type-locality of *Batrachyla longipes*, "40 leagues N Mexico," probably is in north-western Hidalgo, Mexico, near localities where *Syrrhophus latodactylus* is found.

Syrrhophus, as defined by Firschein (1954) would not accommodate *Batrachyla longipes*, and therefore, Lynch (1963) suggested that *B. longipes* be regarded as a *nomen dubium*. Lynch (1967) redefined the ill-defined genus *Syrrhophus* and, as presently defined, *Syrrhophus* would include *Batrachyla longipes*. No evidence is available to suggest that *Syrrhophus latodactylus* and *Batrachyla longipes* are not conspecific, whereas considerable evidence suggests that they are conspecific. The argument of Lynch (1963) that *B. longipes* be regarded as a *nomen dubium* is therefore rejected.

Inclusion of *Batrachyla longipes* in the generic group called *Syrrhophus* poses a problem in that *Epirhexis* Cope, 1866 (type-species by original designation *Batrachyla longipes* Baird), has priority over, and must replace, *Syrrhophus* Cope, 1878 (type-species by monotypy *Syrrhophus marnockii* Cope, 1878). *Epirhexis* received comment (or mention) as a senior name only four times in the literature (Cope, 1866, 1875, 1887, 1889) and has been universally regarded as a generic synonym of *Eleutherodactylus* since 1923. *Syrrhophus* has received considerable comment during the last 70 years and is well entrenched in the zoological literature, inasmuch as it was used in such compilations and monographic studies as those of Gorham (1966), Gunther (1900),

Kellogg (1932), Nieden (1923), Noble (1931), and Smith and Taylor (1948). Serious confusion and instability would be generated by the replacing of the well-established name *Syrrhophus* with the little known *Epirhexis*.

Syrrhophus latodactylus is an uncommon species of frog occurring on the Caribbean slopes of eastern Mexico; because of its rarity it has received little attention in the literature. The name *Batrachyla longipes*, has received equal, if not more, comment than *Syrrhophus latodactylus* but under the name *Eleutherodactylus longipes*. The geographic variation within the species is such that in the future other workers may wish to apply subspecific names to the northern and southern populations. The type-locality of *Syrrhophus latodactylus* is near the northern limits of the species range and that of *Batrachyla longipes* near the southern limit. Little confusion would result from use of the combination *Syrrhophus longipes* as the name of the species currently known as *S. latodactylus* and, if, in the future, subspecific names were to be applied, names would be available for each end of the cline.

Three alternatives are available:

- (A) application of the Law of Priority, replacing *Syrrhophus* Cope, 1878, with *Epirhexis* Cope, 1866, and replacing *Syrrhophus latodactylus* Taylor, 1940, with *Batrachyla longipes* Baird, 1859; or
- (B) suppression of the generic name *Epirhexis* Cope, 1866, and the specific name *longipes*, used in the combination *Batrachyla longipes* by Baird (1859), thus preserving *Syrrhophus* Cope, 1878, and *S. latodactylus* Taylor, 1940; or
- (C) suppression of the generic name *Epirhexis* Cope, 1866, while preserving the specific name *longipes*, used in the combination *Batrachyla longipes* by Baird (1859) thus preserving *Syrrhophus* Cope, 1878, and eliminating the need (should such arise) of providing a new name for the southern population.

Alternative (A) would promote a situation of instability as argued above. The second and third alternatives both have merit in preserving *Syrrhophus* Cope, 1878, and differ only in preserving (or not) the specific name *longipes*, as used in the combination *Batrachyla longipes*. *Batrachyla longipes* was the first name applied to any of the dozen known species of *Syrrhophus* and its preservation would thus not upset any present classification other than the name for the species now called *S. latodactylus*. As pointed out above, the possibility exists for recognizing two subspecies in this species (although this author does not feel such would be of value). Retention of the specific name *longipes* would eliminate the need of proposing a new name for the southern population (should such need arise).

Accordingly, I now request the Commission:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the generic name *Epirhexis* Cope, 1866 (type-species by original designation *Batrachyla longipes* Baird, 1859) for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy;
- (2) to place the generic name suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology;

- (3) to place the generic name *Syrrhophus* Cope, 1878 (gender : masculine), type-species, by monotypy, *Syrrhophus marnockii* Cope, 1878, on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology;
- (4) to place the following specific names on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology;
 - (a) *marnockii* Cope, 1878, as published in the binomen *Syrrhophus marnockii* (type-species of *Syrrhophus* Cope, 1878);
 - (b) *longipes* Baird, 1859, as published in the binomen *Batrachyla longipes*.

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